



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

"You may say what you like, Pat," says Mike, "but I could tell you of people that were cursed by the priest and never throve after it."

"I dare say you could," replied Pat; "and you told me just now of Norah Callaghan dying of Brian Shaughnessy's curse. I dare say a curse is mischievous enough to those that are fools enough to be frightened at it; but I'd like him to try his curse on dumb animals, that have not imagination enough to take fright at it. Sure I'll take Father Sheehy up a cage full of rats, and he may curse them his best, and then, if we see that the rats are the worse of it, we shall know that a priest's curse can do some harm. And I heard the master say that only a couple of hundred years ago the priests used to curse the caterpillars, and all the other troublesome animals in their districts, though they don't do it now, more's the pity; I wish they could curse the fly out of the turnips."

"Then," says Mike, "Pat, I suppose the whole of it is that you do not believe the Saviour left any commission to the priests to curse his enemies."

"Ay, that's just where it is," says Pat; "if I do not mind Father Sheehy's curse, it's not that I think it could do me no harm. Sure I have heard him tell us to call names after people, and throw stones at them, and not to deal with them; and if he was to do that to me, to be sure I'd be the worse of it; but the more I think of it, the more I am convinced that this was not the commission our Lord left his Apostles. Sure I have searched all the New Testament to find where our Saviour told them to curse their enemies—and there's not a word of it in the whole book; quite the contrary—he tells them to love their enemies, and to pray for them that spitefully used them and persecuted them. And St. Peter, that we all ought to mind, told his people never to curse even those that cursed them. Says he, we should follow the example of the Lord, that, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not. You are not, says he, to render railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing: for he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile."—1 Pet. ii. 23; iii. 9.

"Sure," says Mike, "it's a power of Scripture, Pat, ye have got; but I suppose this was only the laity St. Peter told not to curse: but the clergy were to keep this to themselves."

"Not at all, Mike," says Pat. "Here is the instructions St. Paul gives to Timothy, that he ordained himself, about the duties of clergymen—'The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle with all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves.'—2 Tim. ii. 24. Now," says Pat, "I see this, that in the Apostles' time all the world was against the Christians, and they beat them, and imprisoned them, and killed as many of them as they could; and sure it would be a fine thing, then, if the Apostles could put curses on their enemies, and make them afraid to do them a mischief; and yet, we know that they never did, and only opposed them with gentleness, and patience, and meekness, and gave reasons and arguments to those that differed with them. And am I to think the men are like the Apostles now that are afraid to argue with those that differ with them, and give them nothing but hard words and curses instead of argument, and strive to do harm, and get people beaten, that I can't but think are as good Christians as themselves? No, Mike, the more they go on in this way the more I misdoubt their having the right doctrine of Christ. Here, Mike, is what our Lord told his disciples, and I am inclined to follow those that I see keep his command best. Bless them that persecute you. BLESS AND CURSE NOT."

ROSA MADIAT.

THE following is a description of Rosa Madiat, written by a lady who visited her in the month of September last, in the prison in which she is confined in Lucca:—

"28th September, 1852.

"Rosa Madiat is a woman of tall and dignified appearance, with handsome, though strongly-marked features, and dark eyes, sunk deep in their sockets, with a dim, worn look that tells of tears and weary watching. Long imprisonment—for she has been in confinement since May, 1851—and protracted anxiety and suspense, joined to her previous weak state of health, have evidently told upon her; its traces are visible in her thin gray hair, in her emaciated hands, and her drooping head, bowed down with that indescribable expression which acute mental suffering alone can give. But as soon as she began to speak, the unfeigned cheerful resignation, the unquestioning faith, which are her leading charac-

teristics, so lighted up her countenance, that all previous marks of suffering seemed to disappear. There is, however, nothing of the parade of a would-be martyr in Rosa Madiat—no exaggeration, no fanaticism. On the earnest hope being expressed that no arguments, nor promises, nor prospect of speedy deliverance would ever induce her to waver in her profession, she clasped her hands fervently, and looking up to heaven, said—'Oh, no, I trust in God, never! oh, no, I would far sooner die; I do not trust in my own strength, for I know I am a poor, weak woman, and sometimes my heart seems to faint; but I pray to God, and I know, for Christ's sake he will give me strength to glorify him in the end.'

"She has hitherto not been compelled to assume the prison dress, nor to have her hair cut off, the latter in particular being, perhaps, the greatest humiliation to which the feelings of an Italian can be subjected; but it is feared an order from Florence may soon arrive to this effect; she said she expected it from day to day, and hoped for a fitting spirit to enable her cheerfully to submit; her gentle deportment seems to have won the respect of those to whose keeping she is intrusted. On asking one of the nuns, who superintended the female prisoners at Lucca, whether Rosa suffered much, she answered—'Not so much as another would under the circumstances; she is so pious, she has such faith in God.' She expressed much gratitude for the kindness of the nuns, who never taunted or abused her, as had been the case with her former keepers, when she was confined in the Borgello, at Florence.

"Her cell is very small and dark, the lower part of the window being boarded up, and light and air only admitted by a grating at the upper end. At night, when both door and window were closed, the oppression was terrible; she said she could not rest, she felt as if suffocated. The furniture of this room consists of a bed, a bench near the window, and a chair. She is employed in needlework, and at present makes shirts for the galley slaves. Her chief source of annoyance is from the fearful oaths, yells, and shrieks which unceasingly reach her ears, from fifty or sixty of the most abandoned and hardened of her sex, her companions in captivity.

"From the court-yard beneath her window she can also hear the blasphemies and ribald songs of the male prisoners, of whom there are about 300. No tongue can describe all the horrors she is thus compelled to listen to. One night she was repeating the Lord's prayer aloud, and when she came to the words, 'Hallowed be thy name,' she stopped and said—'Ah, no! thy name is not hallowed here; thy name is profaned and outraged all day long. Ah, why do those who build prisons not think of the souls of those they confine in them? Who can ever learn to repent in such a place as this?' She was trying to acquire the custom of speaking aloud to herself; she said it broke the silence of her cell: her voice was like a companion to her. Some days were terrible, when her soul was dark within her, and she was very anxious about her husband—such long, long days, as if they never would come to an end. On others, again, she felt quite cheerful, and scarce conscious of her captivity.

"A person one day asked if her sufferings were not very great. 'Yes, I suffer,' was the reply; 'but I strive always to remember how much more Christ suffered for me, and how thankful I ought to be if I suffer now for his Name's sake.' 'You must be very good, Rosa,' was the rejoinder. 'No, I am not,' she answered; 'there are none good; but what I am, I am by the grace of God; he will give me strength to glorify him.'

"Controversial books were given her to read; but, unlettered as she is on most topics, she is yet thoroughly well read in that Book which maketh wise unto salvation; and the precision and clearness with which she applies its unerring test to the arguments placed before her, would give a salutary lesson to many in these times.

"She shed no tears during our interview; but the muscles of her mouth often quivered, and her poor, thin hands were often pressed nervously together, particularly when speaking of her husband.

"She said she 'tried not to weep, as she feared her tears might be attributed to regret at the course she had taken, or to faint-heartedness.' Those only who understand the Italian character, its warmth of expression and vehemence in lamentation, can adequately appreciate this heroic woman in her calm, Christian endurance and resignation."

THE POWER OF THE KEYS.

THERE are three remarkable passages in the Holy Scriptures, the right understanding of which we hold to be a matter of great importance to sound views of the priestly office in the Church of Christ; and we proceed to consider them with an anxious desire neither unduly to derogate from nor unduly to exalt that reverend office.

The three passages are Matt. xvi. 19, Matt. xviii. 18, John xx. 23.

In Matt. xvi. 19, our Lord, in his address to St. Peter (who had just acknowledged him to be the Christ, the Son of the living God), says—'And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever

thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

In Matt. xviii. 18, our Lord, addressing ALL the apostles, and teaching them how they should deal with offending brethren, says—'Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.'

In John xx. 23, again addressing ALL the apostles, our Lord says—'Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained.'

We shall not now enter into the question, whether the first of these texts, with its context, gave St. Peter a primacy or superiority over the rest of the Apostles—that will form the subject of a distinct consideration, which we shall not overlook in its proper place: our present object of inquiry is a different one, what is the nature and extent of the power conferred by our Blessed Lord in any or all of these passages, upon the Apostles or any of them, or on the bishops and priests who were to succeed them in their pastoral office in future times.

Three things are spoken of by our Lord, which may be either distinct in their nature or several forms of expression for denoting one and the same thing—

1st. The keys of the kingdom of heaven.

2ndly. The power of binding and loosing on earth.

3rdly. The power of remitting or retaining sins.

What "the kingdom of heaven" means in the passage in Matt. xvi. 19, has been the subject of much discussion, and there are strong reasons for holding that it is used in this and other passages as referring to the "kingdom of heaven" in its now existing form of Christ's Church militant here on earth, preparatory to its future development in glory; but we are willing, for the sake of making the discussion as simple as possible, to treat it for the present as if it related directly to the future state of that kingdom only, rather than to its present state as now existing on this earth.

Upon this supposition, the most favourable one to the exaltation of the power of the priesthood, how does the matter in question stand?

On the same night that our Lord was betrayed,* he said to his disciples—"Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

So Matt. xix. 28—"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," which passage closely follows verses 23, 24, in which he says—"A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven, and it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Assuming that those passages refer to the same kingdom of which St. Peter was to be given the keys, it would follow from them that the kingdom appointed to the apostles was no other than CHRIST'S OWN KINGDOM, which the Father had appointed to him, and which is alike, without distinction, called "the kingdom of HEAVEN" and "the kingdom of God." And it is surely manifest, that Christ never intended to deprive himself of his kingly power by conferring on his apostles twelve thrones, on which they were to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.

What, then, was meant by our Lord when he promised St. Peter (admitting the promise was made to him), "I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven?" Could he have meant to relinquish the power of opening and shutting the kingdom of heaven to whomsoever he will, and to bestow on any apostle, however great, that EXCLUSIVE power? Surely it would be equally absurd in reason and inconsistent with the rest of God's revealed Word to think so. We doubt, indeed, if any one, however high his notions of priestly power, would venture to assert a proposition so startling and extravagant.

Hear, however, what our Lord says, in the parable of the ten virgins, who came to the door of the kingdom of heaven, after the door was shut, saying, "Lord, Lord, open to us." Does he answer, Go to Peter, for I have given him the keys? No; but verily I say unto you, "I know you not."

And, again, Rev. i. 17, 18—"Fear not, I am the first and the last, I am he that liveth and was dead, and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." And, Rev. iii. 7—"These things, saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth."

Can any one doubt that Christ, who is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, has still in his hands the keys of both heaven and hell, and that neither St. Peter nor any other can open or shut the kingdom of heaven, in the same sense that our Lord does, "that hath the key of David, and that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth?"

* The following specimen of such a curse is abridged from Ducange, quoted in the Encyclopædia Metropolitana, (article excommunication)—"A complaint having been made to us, by the inhabitants of such a place, that certain cankerworms, caterpillars, and sorfth have destroyed the fruits of the vines on several years, and are doing so in this present year, to the great detriment of the inhabitants of the place; and a request having been made to us that we would compel the said animals to depart, by ecclesiastical remedies, we, by the authority which we enjoy in these parts, do admonish the said cankerworms, caterpillars, or by whatever name they may be called, under pain of malediction and anathema, to depart within six days from these regions, and to do no injury either there or in any other place in this diocese. And if, within the above-named six days, the aforesaid animals do not obey this our admonition, then by these writings we curse and anathematize them." This was in the year 1516.